

THE CASSADAGAN.

"Seeing we also are compassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses."

VOL. V.—No. 6.

MEADVILLE, PA., FEBRUARY, 1895.

25 CENTS A YEAR.

MARION H. SKIDMORE.

Her Characteristics, Labors and Success.

[To the casual reader this simple chronicle of dates and occurrences will serve as meager clues to the life it affects to reveal. No artist can seize upon and perpetuate the essence of a character. The living soul may not be photographed. But it sometimes occurs that the eyes of love can discern vastly more in a picture than appears to the ordinary vision. For those, therefore, who are able to endow a cold and colorless sketch with the warmth and naturalness of spiritual life, this pen-portrait of Marion Skidmore is lovingly inscribed.]

MRS. MARION H. SKIDMORE, Spiritualist, philanthropist, woman suffragist and advocate of universal brother and sisterhood, was born in Gilbertsville, Otsego county, N. Y., September 8, 1826. Her ancestors were among the early settlers of the Empire state. She was the daughter of William Johnson, a farmer of vigorous intellect and exceptional originality, and the granddaughter of a Baptist divine. Her mother was Olive Mann. When twelve years of age, Mrs. Skidmore removed with her parents to Laona, Chautauqua county, N. Y., where the family located as pioneer and permanent residents.

The youthful Marion was educated in the common district schools, supplemented by a continued course of timely and classic reading. Being of sunny disposition and even temper, she was a general favorite with her associates, both old and young. She was of that rare type of girlhood which is bright, witty and winning, and happily untainted either by undue boldness or gushing sentimentality. She was maidenly and modest to the very core of her being, though even in this spring-time of her life people were wont to wonder at the largeness of her mental grasp, and occasionally her overly anxious elders would deprecate her outspoken denunciation of many existing evils, which it was then the fashion to ignore. She keenly enjoyed a good natured argument, and even her mental opponents were compelled to acknowledge the lucidity of her logic and the legitimacy of her conclusions, very frequently to their own chagrin.

As she approached maturity, an intense love of right and justice took deeper and deeper root in her sympathetic and compassionate heart. It seemed to be her choice to espouse every outraged principle and unpopular cause. Her comprehension of equity knew neither country nor race. The wrongs of the black men and women of the South appealed to her merciful spirit as would the oppression of brothers and sisters at her own fireside. In the midst of a community that regarded the negro as akin to beasts of burden, this young girl was an uncompromising abolitionist. She investigated Spiritualism at a time when its



MRS. MARION H. SKIDMORE.

phenomena was commonly looked upon as black magic, and its philosophy was repudiated as ungodly fanaticism. Nevertheless she examined its claims, weighed its evidence and eventually risked social ostracism by calmly announcing herself to her little world as a Spiritualist. In the days when women were held to be mental inferiors of men she dared to declare the supposition false. She urged the co-education of the sexes long before the subject was deemed worthy of serious consideration by the professors of academies and colleges, and was among the very first to enroll her name as a petitioner for the ballot.

Fifty years ago the individual who had the boldness to openly voice these revolutionary ideas was deemed either a dangerous or a deluded enthusiast, whom it was wise to discourage or shun. How came it then, that this inexperienced and guileless girl, this unsophisticated representative of a retired village and work-a-day people, was endowed with a capability to think of these advanced thoughts, and was possessed of the courage and the power to proclaim her convictions and beliefs, without losing one iota of her comrade's and townspeople's respect and affection? Who can tell? Was it chance, heredity or fate? Was it the result of earnest, persistent striving? Did her sensitive and aspiring nature vibrate to impressions received from loftier intelligences? Or may she not have been the human manifestation of a greatly unfolded spirit, who had taken on an earthly garment of flesh for a philanthropic and sacred purpose?

Whatever may have been the cause which

led her into these broad, unfrequented paths of progress, it did not spring from narrow partisanship, nor was it the outgrowth of personal ambition or greed of gain. It was an absorbing instinct of oneness with humanity; a resistless impulse toward higher and higher spiritual ground; an insistent intuition or consciousness of her own divinely appointed place of usefulness, that impelled her to keep pace with the onward march of the foremost minds of her century. Outwardly, her life, at this period was uneventful and commonplace. Her willing hands performed their allotted tasks with faithfulness and skill, but the dull routine of domestic duties could not still her constant gropings for light, or enchain the mighty thoughts that demanded to wander and to soar.

In 1854, the subject of this sketch was united in marriage with Thomas J. Skidmore, an ambitious and independent-natured young bridge contractor, of Dunkirk, N. Y. The observant and companionable wife accompanied her husband on many of his business travels which were quite extensive. During these years of enjoyable roaming she indulged and encouraged her aptitude for the study and comprehension of human nature, and all the complex, religious, social and political sentiments, conditions and tendencies of the age. In this way she gained considerable knowledge of the world, and acquired that superb control over her own impulses and emotions which was a constant marvel to the more excitable of her sex.

Mrs. Skidmore became the mother of two daughters. One returned to her native home in the unseen universe while yet an unnamed babe. The other, Lydia Olive, who was born to her in 1856, and was affectionately known as "Kitty," grew to womanhood, but passed to super-mundane planes in 1875.

Marion Skidmore was once heard to say, "Nothing so becomes a woman as womanliness." With equal truth it may be said that no role ever became her gracious self, as did that of a beloved and loving wife, surrounded with dainty and artistic belongings, and crowned with the soft halo of happy motherhood. Over this portrayal the pen of her biographer is fain to linger. But it is not mete that the holiest experiences of her inmost being should be breathed even to the most sympathetic ear; for even among those who knew her best, only the few, who are gifted with the finest appreciation of pure, self-forgetful, wifely and motherly love, will apprehend the full beauty and touching tenderness of her domestic life.

During the summer of 1881, Mrs. Skidmore accepted the office of vice-president of the Cassadaga Association, and immediately identified herself with the interests of its annual

Assemblies. From this date forward, her life clearly reveals the potent force of a well defined and unfaltering purpose. The tides of an auspicious opportunity had borne her to her sphere. She had discovered her mission. Rousing herself from the extreme apathy which had followed upon the transition of her cherished daughter, she threw the accumulated talents and wisdom of her years into the cause of Spiritualism and Cassadaga, with all the abandon and self-sacrifice of a supreme and saintly devotion.

In 1882, by reason of the unexpected resignation of the regular, and the absence of the appointed president of the Association, the onerous duties of this important position of trust fell upon Mrs. Marion Skidmore. Timid, but undismayed, she braced herself to her unsought tasks. She found herself confronted by the discouragement of an empty treasury, and apparently hedged in on every side by peculiarly opposing and depressing circumstances. Did she shrink, or falter? No. She drew upon her own private purse for inspiration, and set her face toward duty. Her unflagging zeal and unremitting efforts removed seemingly unremovable difficulties, and she triumphed. The Assembly of 1882 was an unprecedented success. Long before the season's close, an embarrassing press of congratulations poured in upon the surprised and somewhat abashed president, who had not counted upon capturing the coy prize of public favor.

Mrs. Skidmore served as vice-president of the Cassadaga Association for three consecutive years. During her last term in this office she was elected a member of its board of trustees or directors. This position she held throughout the remaining years of her earthly ministry.

The living, though silent witnesses of her unassuming toil and accomplishment at Cassadaga Lake, are as innumerable as are the leaves of those grand old trees which spread a grateful shade for her passing feet. They are everywhere and in every thing. There is no admirable feature, either spiritual or otherwise, to be found at this beautiful retreat, which does not bear mute testimony to her thoughtfulness, thoroughness and care. The library, the classes in psychic science and the renowned "Woman's Day," stand as towering credits to her inventive brain and enthusiastic efforts, while the high tone of the intellectual and pleasure attractions, and the atmosphere of culture which has happily and uninterruptedly prevailed, have been, to an appreciable degree, the reflection of her own gifted mentality and inborn refinement.

Mrs. Skidmore was long and widely known as "The Mother of Lily Dale." This title of affection and esteem was not borne by her by right of having personally conceived or projected the project of the camp and its delightful meetings. It was but the general and grateful recognition of that warm welcome which she extended to all visitors alike, regardless of class or creed, and of that constant, brooding watchfulness, which she manifested

for their comfort and happiness. The prosperity of Cassadaga was indeed dear to her, but the welfare of its contrastingly individualized sojourners was far dearer. No one was intentionally overlooked. No one was looked down upon. Mrs. Skidmore was profoundly religious, and to be the living and impartial friend of the whole human family was the first and last and only article of her unbroken faith.

She was totally deaf to gossip and to scandal. She absolutely refused to judge the motives or actions of any other than herself. To her unhorizoned vision no man or woman was ever lost to the possibility of useful citizenship or right living. She would give the sinner a chance. Nay, not one, but as many as were needful; and in the meantime, it was not this apostolic woman's way to keep him or her upon the rack of perpetual shame. She held that good morals are contagious. She believed it to be the duty of all men and women who walk the clean hills of morality, to extend a helping hand to the multitude of unfortunates whose paths lie through the slimy valleys of low desires. She would never condemn a victim of any vice. It was always her aim to surround the benighted one with so pure and sisterly an influence that he or she would be insensibly wooed to honesty, sobriety and virtue.

It must be granted that she lived fully up to the high mark of her convictions. It is told that once upon a time a heart-broken and repentant magdalen strayed to the gates of Lily Dale, and tremblingly asked permission to enter. The woman was faultless in her manner and attire, beautiful and a genius; but she had taken one false step, and been found out. The management was perplexed and took time for consideration. The question of her admittance was still in doubt when Mrs. Skidmore solved the delicate problem by agreeing to make the woman her own especial charge. The local Madam Grundys were horrified. One of their number had the temerity to hint to the silver-haired woman that her protection of "that dreadful woman" was quite generally disapproved. "Are you not afraid," was the protest, "that you may damage the reputation of the Camp?" "No," she answered, in her slow, tranquil way. "I am not afraid of that, or of anything, or of anybody. I am too busy." What could be done? Nothing. Mrs. Skidmore, fearless in the strength of her own spotless womanhood, was secure from assaillment. She would brook neither interference nor dictation. She never would. From the decision of her own conscience there was no appeal. It may be added that "the dreadful woman" whom Mrs. Skidmore shielded from social persecution, proved herself worthy of befriending. Cheered and instilled with hope and determination by that blessed companionship with her noble benefactress, she bravely battled with the world's prejudices, till it surrendered to her penitence, and yielded her an honest return for faithful toil.

Personally, Mrs. Skidmore was dignified,

unaffected and most kind; of medium height, with a fine head and brow framed in abundant grey hair; blue eyes, well-opened and searching, in whose depths you might now and then come to see a dreamy softness; a striking face, marked by no deep, austere lines, but wearing an expression of serene contentment. An approachable woman, who met you with a close, cordial hand-clasp, a reassuring smile and a certain intentness of gaze, as though she was making an appeal to the best that was in you to come forth. A born home-maker; whose dwelling place was a haven of mental as well as physical rest; a dispenser of spiritual as well as temporal cheer. Her favorites in literature and history were Robert Burns and Joan of Arc. She gloried in the Scotch ploughboy's inimitable songs of the common people, and in the heroism of the immortal maid who died a martyr to mysticism. She kept herself apart from the enslaving toils of fashion. She wore her own choice of gowns and in her own way. Her dress was never of noticeable richness, but always neat, comfortable, and in good taste. Her favorite color was white, and she was passionately fond of flowers. She was no respecter of persons. Her intimate friends were as likely to be chosen from one walk in life as another. Position or wealth was no passport to her consideration. She affiliated with companionable ideas, and not with outward show. The distinguishing traits of her character were candor, loyalty, benevolence, and an unshakable faith in the ultimate good of all ill. She scorned deceit and loathed intrigue. Her recipe for happiness was to have nothing to conceal. Yet it must not be imagined that her pilgrimage on earth was one of unmixed joy. She was what the world would call a fortunate woman, inasmuch as the generous man whose name she bore had bestowed upon her the gift of financial independence. But Mrs. Skidmore had felt the unyielding and long continued touch of bodily pain, and had drank deeply of the cup of grief. She had known the bitterness of awakening to the unworthiness of some, whom she had learned to love and trust; and she had also suffered keenly from a sensitive perception of her own faults and failings. But she never surrendered to weakness. She learned to take a broader survey of life, and to more and more concentrate her desires upon larger and larger good, until, in time, she quite forgot about personal burdens or wrongs or blemishes. Perhaps they could not follow her into the wide expanse of universal love.

Cassadaga was the pride and hope of her best and closing years. Here she strove to devise ways and means to lessen the miseries of her age. It mattered not to her that the majority of humanity refused to accept the message of peace and good will which went forth from her stronghold, or that they failed to listen to its tidings of great and immortal joy. She courted neither reward nor applause, nor appreciation. Sometimes her husband, whose purse was in constant demand, would grow pardonably weary of the thankless grumbling of a certain element whose chief business in life

THE CASSADAGAN

Will be published monthly under the auspices of the Cassadaga Lake Free Association, and will be furnished to subscribers at the following rates:

One copy one year.....	25 Cents
Five copies.....	\$1.00
Ten copies.....	1.75
Twenty copies.....	3.00
Forty copies.....	5.00

All remittances should be made to A. E. Gaston, Meadville, Pa.

Board of Trustees C. L. F. A.

H. W. Richardson, East Aurora, N. Y.
T. J. Skidmore, Lily Dale, N. Y., *Treasurer*.
Mrs. M. H. Skidmore, Lily Dale, N. Y.
Mrs. A. L. Pettengill, Cleveland, O.
M. R. Rouse, Titusville, Pa.
D. B. Merritt, Linden, N. Y.
A. Gaston, Meadville, Pa., *President*.
A. E. Gaston, Meadville, Pa., *Secretary*.

IN MEMORIAM.

IT was the writer's good fortune to be associated with Marion H. Skidmore, as Trustee of the Cassadaga Lake Free Association, for some ten years. We say good fortune, for no person could come in contact with such a strong character, possessed with high and lofty ideals, without being benefited thereby. With her husband she joined in a hospitality that opened wide their doors to the lowly as well as the more favored in life, greeting each and all with the same genial smile of welcome. Hers was a friendship that strengthens our faith in human nature, for it never faltered, and he or she so fortunate as to be placed upon her list of friends, could rest secure knowing there never would be a betrayal.

A high sense of duty and loyalty to truth, supported by a firmness and perseverance that knew no such word as fail, inspired all who came within the sphere of her influence, holding them to the task in hand. This combination of remarkably developed faculties was the secret of her power for good in whatever field of reform she entered. The loss of her daughter many years ago, led to the investigation of the claims of modern Spiritualism. Having once become convinced of its truth, and recognizing its importance to the world, she entered into the work of spreading this new truth with a faith that was never shaken, with a zeal, earnestness and persistence that never tired, never faltering, ever encouraging the weak and hesitating. Thus carrying the torch of truth into the darkened spiritual chambers of many an unbeliever, thereby making the world brighter and better through a faith born of knowledge. Her charity was as broad as humanity itself, covering the vices and sins as well as the weakness and foibles of the whole world. It was based upon a knowledge of the law of heredity and environment and a faith in the divine purpose that would lead even the lowest, unhappy victim up to a higher life if need be through cleansing fires of suffering and anguish of spirit.

Her judgment through her intellectual powers and unerring intuitions was invaluable on all matters pertaining to camp work and policy. Her guiding hand has been felt in all directions. For years she was one of the committee that arranged the list of speakers, some

seasons acting alone in that capacity. The lyceum received her special fostering care, while the library was built up through her zealous efforts, and thus it was in all directions. Of music she favored the best. Our improvements she took an active interest in, the beautifying of the grounds she labored to carry forward at all seasons. Having purchased all the stock the by-laws allowed, and still desirous of assisting in every direction, she in a quiet, unostentatious way continued to purchase stock, presenting it to those who would not otherwise have owned any, thereby helping the Association and showing a personal appreciation for some struggling speaker or medium, again in a more modest way assisting some less fortunate brother or sister, benefactions of which the world never knew.

But why enumerate further—those hands and that brain, prompted by her generous heart, were never still. The cause of Spiritualism, Temperance, Woman's Suffrage, all reforms that agitate the world to-day, received her active sympathy and aid, and now that she has gone to a higher life, has entered a higher school, we, who are still left in the primary department, can best show our regard, our esteem, our faith in her, by striving to carry forward the work along the same lines she pursued all these years, and thus be worthy, when we shall clasp hands on the other shore, of that divine friendship, that holier fraternal love the angel world fosters and perpetuates. Of Marion H. Skidmore, it can be truly said, Her many virtues form the noblest monument to her memory.

A. GASTON.

A TRIBUTE TO MARION H. SKIDMORE.

BY W. J. COLVILLE.

THOUGH numerous kindly and appreciative words have already been spoken and written in affectionate commemoration of the noble life and earnest work of our recently translated sister whom we loved to regard as the Spiritual Mother at Cassadaga Camp, as one of her inner circle of friends, I feel that it would be graceless indeed, for me to refrain from adding a syllable of my own to the chorus of well merited praise which is rising in loving volume, called forth from overflowing hearts who found in her a devoted friend and most effective helper in every time of need. It was at the very opening of the C. L. F. A. grounds in 1880 or 1881 that I first met Mr. and Mrs. Skidmore. They were then hale and vigorous in the prime of ripened manhood and womanhood, and never has it been my privilege to know a more united and devoted couple, or to find two active workers in the broad vineyards of reform, more completely given up to the glorious causes they had espoused. As Thos. Skidmore is still among us on the mortal plane it is not of him, so much as of his treasured wife that I must now speak, though I can never separate them in thought, and shall certainly never seek to do so. What has struck me as so particularly beautiful in Mrs. Skidmore's character has been her amazing liberality of thought coupled with a truly marvelous charity,

using that often abused word in the royal sense in which it is employed in the writings of the greatest teachers of all times and districts. Love for all that is beautiful and true, combined with sweet compassion for all in distress, led our translated sister to spare neither time, work or money in carrying forward the many enterprises which lay close to her great, generous, tender heart. She was a typical Spiritualist of the noblest type, one who could not be bound by party lines or held in sectarian fetters, but to whom a Spiritual philosophy of life meant a view of all human relations and activities, so broad and comprehensive that it included warm participation in everything conducing to the betterment of human conditions on all planes of expression. It is noticeable that the Woman's Suffrage Movement in America and the birth of modern Spiritualism occurred the same year (1848) and so thoroughly did our tireless sister unite her interest in these two great causes, that she advocated them both as one. Who that has ever been at Cassadaga Camp on Woman's Day, which is the grandest day of all the year at Lily Dale, will be likely to forget the active part performed by Marion Skidmore in that eventful annual celebration, the success of which has always depended so largely on her indefatigable undertakings. To her is largely due the honor of gathering together year by year the ablest advocates of equal rights and therefore equal suffrage, and in no work of her life did she shine forth more brilliantly than among the stars in the emancipation firmament. But though illustrious in public movements, ever ready to show her deep abiding interest in educational efforts of the most uplifting character, it was in the sanctuary of her simple, but beautiful home that she proved her worth most of all. It has always been a marvel to her friends how that patient, active, loving woman could voluntarily sacrifice all privacy and even needed rest for the sake of entertaining all sorts of people and lightening everybody's burdens to the fullest extent of her ability. I have lived in her home and seen her day by day, and I frankly confess that I have not reached the sublime height of altruism where I can be as totally self-sacrificing as was she. I always felt that she gave up too much of her needed retirement to the incessant demands of callers upon every sort of errand, but no doubt she helped people so truly, in so many ways, that her noble spirit prompted her to do exactly as she did, and we cannot doubt that such ceaseless effort for the good of others must enable whoever engages in it, and at the same time greatly bless those who are the recipients of such bounty. To give oneself is surely infinitely more than to give simply what one can spare out of one's income and belongings, and it was that costly gift of her own true self that made this saintly woman so truly great and so grand a type of heroine. Mrs. Skidmore was in every sense a Nineteenth century woman and she was even a "new woman" of the very best variety. She had no sympathy with traditional superstitions, therefore she was not conventionally religious, but truly spiritual, in the

Her guiding hand has been felt in all directions. For years she was one of the committee that arranged the list of speakers, some

character has been her amazing liberality of thought coupled with a truly marvelous charity,

ventionally religious, but truly spiritual, in the

and phenomena of Spiritualism alike appealed to her, and she derived great consolation from both combined, her keen intellect was always on the alert to make practical use of all the lessons she had learned in a manner highly conducive to the general welfare. As a woman of mind, as well as heart, she was unusual. Not every one knew how deep a thinker and cogent a reasoner she was. Her intellect was clear as crystal; her logic was unflinching; her appreciation of the purest literature was keen. Though never critical, in the harsher sense, she was a most discriminating listener and one who heartily supported every speaker by her presence in the audience and frequently upon the platform. I can truly say, I knew Mrs. Skidmore, therefore, I loved, admired, and revered her. I have never known a truer or a kinder friend, and in saying this, I am but feebly echoing what thousands can say likewise. Of course she will be sorrowfully missed in mortal presence at Lily Dale the coming summer, and for many years to come, but I am one of those who devoutly hope and firmly believe that her unseen presence and continued spiritual activity will inspire her successors, whoever they may be, to erect her befitting monument in a grander, higher Camp in fulfillment of her most earnest prayers.

Most noble, tender, kind and wise
Among the heroines of worth,
Revolving in a sacred sphere
In harmony with all on earth.
O, let us think of her to-day,
How basking in the realm of light,
Surrounded by angelic friends;
Kindling as ever fires by night,
Inducing weary hearts and cold;
Down avenues of warmth and peace,
More satisfying than the paths
Of earthly kings whose crowns increase.
Right loving was she, is she still;
Ever advancing up life's hill.

Most blest of all is mother love.
Over all life its halo glows;
Till in the light of its pure beam,
High heaven itself with bliss o'erflows.
Even in that celestial home,
Removed from all of toil and care,
Over the splendid landscape bright,
Flows mother love toward everywhere.
Close to this mother's loving heart
A project for man's blessing lies.
She sees how truth may be revealed,
So that dark error withering dies.
Amid her new found joy and rest,
Devoted to earth's welfare still,
An angel messenger is she;
Giving herself with perfect will.
Around her now the happy songs
Celestial, greet her opened ear;
Amid those scenes of rare delight,
Mother still watches, eye grown clear,
Planting white lilies, hearts to cheer.

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE.

MRS. MARION H. SKIDMORE, whose name is indissolubly connected with the history of our Camp, has passed from the life that now is, to the life that is to be; from expression upon this plane, to the conscious activities of that other, of which we learn dimly and in fragments. There are very few persons who were acquainted with Mrs. Skidmore, who were not mindful of her many-sidedness; few, indeed, are the women, interested in the cause of Spiritualism, who have a clearer conception of its connection with all the various departments of human well-being, than had she

name of Cassadaga is spoken. Her zeal in its advancement, her sterling sense, her clear illumination, her cheerfulness, and *hospitality to all struggling truth*, were conspicuous, and endeared her, most tenderly, to the writer of this, who had so many opportunities, during a long number of years, as a frequent guest in her beautiful home, to observe and understand her character.

And now that the structure, through which this spiritual energy made itself manifest to the denizens of the earth, has at last succumbed to the tax placed upon it by the tenant, too prodigal of her vital resources, we would express our appreciation of her labor and her loss.

Our arisen sister was a most zealous and enthusiastic believer in the cause of Woman Suffrage, and insisted, at all times, and under all circumstances, in the recognition of the right of my sex to name, and place, and pursuit. She required a *practice* of the *precepts* of equality, as enunciated by the most earnest advocates of this reform. This mental attitude made itself manifest in the very atmosphere of Cassadaga Camp, colored its conventions, and carried with it, to many a doubting mind, a consciousness of its ultimate acceptance everywhere.

So thoroughly imbued was she with the necessity of this particular branch of human progress, that she ransacked her brain, continually, for new and novel methods by which to present its claims.

Naturally a mind, so awakened to an apprehension of these discrepancies in human relationships, did not remain content with Spiritualism *per se*, nor Woman Suffrage, nor Temperance, nor Education, but inquired, also, into the painful and perplexing problem of poverty; and many a time have I discussed with her, most earnestly, the possibilities and uncertainties that surround what is known as the great Labor Movement, so intimately interwoven with the *spirit* of modern Spiritualism.

Her sympathy, in this direction, was so great, that she told the writer she was conscious of tramping, and sleeping in cold and hunger, when the Army of Coxe was gathering for its memorable march upon Washington.

She insisted, and persisted, in the presentation of these themes upon the platform of the Camp—which, I may be pardoned for saying, has become celebrated for its liberality—seeming to realize that no genuine advancement in Spiritual things can be made, if these movements be not grounded in the bed-rock of material welfare.

The services of the summer of 1894, at the resort of the Silver Chain Lakes, will, indeed, be rendered memorable by the fact that it was the last of her earthly efforts in its behalf. And whoever has seen her, hastening hither and thither, amid its shaded walks, bent upon the unfoldment of the various plans which constantly presented themselves to her active mind, or sitting quietly upon the rostrum, flushed with fervor at the delivery, through some inspired instrument, of a truth which she valued, will feel the depression deepen, with

be it said of her, she wore herself out in efforts to invigorate and to sustain the cause of *consciousness of continued life*; that she saw the necessity for effort along new and untried lines, and bravely undertook the battle; that she firmly believed in the blessedness of bestowing the best upon even the worst, and grew and thrived upon the progress of the principles she loved.

The Messenger of Death came slowly, and I watched the changes in the form and face. When the early days of September were upon us, I knew that her spirit was preparing for its passage to the other shore. In the quietude of her home, the last evening I ever sat with her, the influences around us talked with her about the outlook for her beloved Cassadaga. She heard the messages, and seemed cheered by their delivery. The following day I lingered near her, in the store, at Jamestown, where she purchased the laces, which, I am told, fell around her face when her friends beheld her form, for the last time, before the sods of winter fell upon, and covered it.

God bless thee, Marion Skidmore! I shall not forget how thou didst strengthen me, with thy firm, friendly hands, amid the struggles of my public work; and, when opportunity presents, it is certain we shall feel the impetus which her arisen spirit, tempered in many trials, will impart, as we continue to carry forward the Bright Banner of our Common Cause.

Rejoice, oh Soul! thy earth-life ended,
And other spheres at last in view;
The truths thou bravely hast defended
Will yield a harvest, strange and new.

Awakened to thy life's creation,
In fields all filled with ripened grain,
Enjoy the fruits of thy probation
In worlds like this, so filled with pain.

Press forward, we, amid the shadows,
Each striving to evolve the right,
Till, we, too, reach the shining meadows,
And bask in Truth's eternal light.

MRS. H. S. LAKE.

Feb. 21., 1895.

IN MEMORIAM.

To the Editor of Cassadagan:

I cannot understand why my friend, Marion Skidmore, has been called from her post of usefulness. This problem is too heavy for me. At the time I enjoyed her delightful hospitality I looked upon her as a woman who would work for Lily Dale and its spiritual growth for years to come and never grow weary of her task. All I can say is that we who are left, must strive to be like her and to do what we may to supplement her glorious work of saving souls through the ministry of love.

Yours in the bonds of faith, hope and charity,
ISABELLA BEECHER HOOKER.

Editor Cassadagan:

It seems impossible that dear Mrs. Skidmore has gone from our mortal sight forever. I loved her. She was the light and life of Lily Dale. How we all, who impartially shared in her kind thoughts, will miss her! And on Woman Suffrage days—can it be possible that that noble, motherly woman will be no more there to preside over it? And yet, when I think of the belief, or knowledge, as she would say, of so many of her dear friends that she is not gone, but with them in a fuller sense than ever, I am led to exclaim, "Verily Spiritualists eat of bread the world knows not of."

Yours, sincerely,
SUSAN B. ANTHONY.

of Spiritualism, who have a clearer conception of its connection with all the various departments of human well-being, than had she

mind, or sitting quietly upon the rostrum, flushed with fervor at the delivery, through some inspired instrument, of a truth which she valued, will feel the depression deepen, with

gone, but with them in a fuller sense than ever, I am led to exclaim, "Verily Spiritualists eat of bread the world knows not of."

Yours, sincerely,
SUSAN B. ANTHONY.

is to neglect their own. Occasionally, under stress of a new irritation, he would emphatically announce that he was determined to "give up Cassadaga."

Mrs. Skidmore would invariably calmly reply: "Very well. But I will never give it up. I shall give and do for Cassadaga as long as I live." In these prophetic words, there again shines forth the hidden, guiding impetus of action, which may be traced, like a gleaming thread of gold, through all the changing years of her temporal existence. Let come what could, she would follow the promptings of that mysterious interior guide. She would be true to her highest ideals.

* * * * *

O, Spirit of Marion Skidmore! From your home in Paradise, bear witness to this inspiration. It was the light of your own divine soul that pointed the way and led you on and on till the blossoms of your earth-life culminated in the fruition of a perfect specimen of nineteenth century, American womanhood.

IDA WORDEN WHEELER.

GONE HOME.

AT Cincinnati, Ohio, on Sunday, February 3, at 9:30 a. m., the brave and loyal spirit of Mrs. Marion H. Skidmore, of Lily Dale, N. Y., gently released itself from physical environments and enriched by the manifold experiences of nearly seventy years in earth-life, entered tranquilly upon a fuller existence in spiritual realms.

Mrs. Skidmore, in rapidly failing health, was en route for home from Lake Helen, Fla., where she had been spending the winter. She reached Cincinnati safely, but in so enfeebled a condition as to necessitate immediate rest from the fatigue of traveling. She was at once removed to the residence of Mr. and Mrs. John T. Lillie, where she received the most thoughtful comforts and solicitous care. Mrs. Skidmore was naturally eager to reach the soothing shelter of her own roof, yet she instinctively divined that this comfort was to be denied her. Her inward monitor told her truly. As the hours went by her strength grew less and less, and it soon became evident that her northward journey could never be resumed. She bore her disappointment with fortitude and her suffering with uncomplaining patience. Mrs. Skidmore's husband and near relatives were hastily summoned to her bedside, but no skill or service of love could stay the crumbling of the tabernacle which the real woman had forever outgrown.

She met the change with unflinching courage and peace of mind. With almost her latest breath she whispered to her watching loved ones, "all is well." This was the final verdict of her quickened consciousness, as it passed the limitations of matter and sense and paused for an instant upon the threshold of the world beyond.

Funeral services conducted by Mrs. R. S. Lillie, of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Mrs. Clara Watson, of Jamestown, New York, were held on Wednesday, February 6, from her late hos-

pitable abode on the pleasant shores of Cassadaga Lake. The frail and wasted form of clay, which could no longer serve as a medium for her great soul, was robed in white and reposed in a black-draped casket, amid a choice profusion of the fragrant, blossoming offerings of loving neighbors and sincere friends.

Both speakers paid glowing tributes to the ennobling influence of Mrs. Skidmore's sterling character and purposeful life. Mrs. Watson recalled a sad time of timidity at the outset of her own public career, when words of counsel and cheer from the lips and heart of her arisen sister strengthened her waning faith and in a great measure determined her future course. "Even at this moment," concluded Mrs. Watson, "I feel the stimulus of her bravery, of her perception and her strength. I sense her presence like that of a personal entity, and I feel within and around me the healing calm of her uplifting thought. With my inner ear I hearken to her voice, and it falls and sinks into my interior sensibility with all the grace and power of an approving and blessed benediction."

Mrs. Lillie's address was both reminiscent and eulogistic. A feeling allusion was made to Mrs. Skidmore's native charity, which was pronounced broad enough to embrace every pitiable weakness known to mankind. "Her generosity was proverbial and well-nigh boundless," said Mrs. Lillie. "No mortal can compass the extent of her unostentatious ministrations to distressed and over-burdened humanity, and she was never known to be too occupied with society or pleasure to give attention and perchance relief to a perplexed or sorrowing soul. No monument of granite need be raised to commemorate her virtues or her deeds. They are deeply engraven upon the hearts of countless recipients of her favors and regard and they are recorded at full length in the past and present history of Lily Dale, which they illumine with the mild but steady radiance of a supreme devotion to its prosperity and usefulness."

"It is but human that we should yearn for the tangible companionship of this inspiring woman. It is but human that our tears should sometimes flow when we face the bleak actuality of coming years that must be evermore empty of her dear familiar face. But when we remember her divine heritage of eternal progression: when we remember that she is now basking in the glorious sunshine of painless, deathless immortal life, absorbing and assimilating the lessons of her well spent years, let us smile and strive to grow content and even learn to echo her own characteristic refrain "all is well."

* * * * *

A private car carried the funeral party to Fredonia, New York. There, in the peaceful, country quiet of "Forest Hill," close beside a grave that tells the story of a beloved daughter gone before, the mortal and earthly expression of the spirit of Mrs. Marion Skidmore was tenderly committed to its last resting place in the presence of the lonely husband, Mr. Thomas J. Skidmore; relatives, Mr. Oscar W. Johnson, of Fredonia, Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Cook, of Fredonia, Mr. Henry Skidmore, of Corry, Pa., Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Skidmore, of Fredonia, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Babbitt and Miss Jessie Skidmore, of Corry, Mr. Henry Skid-

more, of Huntington, Ind., Mr. and Mrs. Oscar W. Skidmore, of Thornton, Ill., Mrs. Martha T. Tolles, of Dunkirk, N. Y.; Mr. Wm. Rann and Miss Rann, of Buffalo, N. Y.; Mr. T. J. Skidmore, of Chicago, Mr. A. D. Johnson and Miss Johnson, of Buffalo, and a large gathering of family friends and acquaintances, among whom were Hon. A. Gaston and Mrs. Gaston, of Meadville, Pa., Mr. H. W. Richardson, of East Aurora, N. Y., Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Eicke, of West Monterey, Pa., Mrs. Caroline H. Henderson and Miss Hattie Critchfield of Erie, Pa., Mrs. Eliza Cook, of Jamestown, N. Y., Mrs. Doss Henderson, of Cleveland, Ohio.

C. L. F. A.

PROGRAMME FOR 1895.

- July.
- Sat. 13. Mrs. Carrie Twing.
 - Sun. 14. Mrs. Carrie Twing, Lyman C. Howe.
 - Mon. 15. Conference.
 - Tues. 16. Mrs. Jennie B. H. Jackson.
 - Wed. 17. Mrs. Carrie Twing.
 - Thur. 18. Lyman C. Howe.
 - Fri. 19. Mrs. Jennie B. H. Jackson.
 - Sat. 20. Lyman C. Howe.
 - Sun. 21. Mrs. Jennie B. H. Jackson, Hon. L. V. Moulton.
 - Mon. 22. Conference.
 - Tues. 23. Hon. L. V. Moulton.
 - Wed. 24. T. Grimshaw.
 - Thur. 25. Hon. L. V. Moulton.
 - Fri. 26. T. Grimshaw.
 - Sat. 27. Dr. Fred L. H. Willis.
 - Sun. 28. Ida P. A. Whitlock, Hon. A. B. Richmond.
 - Mon. 29. Conference.
 - Tues. 30. Ida P. A. Whitlock.
 - Wed. 31. Dr. Fred L. H. Willis.
- August.
- Thur. 1. Mrs. Celia M. Nickerson.
 - Fri. 2. Dr. Fred L. H. Willis.
 - Sat. 3. Mrs. Celia M. Nickerson, Rev. W. W. Hicks.
 - Sun. 4. Mrs. H. S. Lake.
 - Mon. 5. Conference.
 - Tue. 6. Mrs. H. S. Lake.
 - Wed. 7. Temperance Day, Hon. A. B. Richmond.
 - Thur. 8. Mrs. H. S. Lake.
 - Fri. 9. Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond.
 - Sat. 10. Rev. W. W. Hicks.
 - Sun. 11. Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, J. Clegg Wright.
 - Mon. 12. Conference.
 - Tues. 13. J. Clegg Wright.
 - Wed. 14. Labor Day.
 - Thur. 15. Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond.
 - Fri. 16. J. Clegg Wright.
 - Sat. 17. Geo. A. Fuller, M. D.
 - Sun. 18. W. W. Hicks.
 - Mon. 19. Conference.
 - Tues. 20. W. J. Colville.
 - Wed. 21. Woman's Day.
 - Thur. 22. Geo. A. Fuller, M. D.
 - Fri. 23. Geo. F. Perkins.
 - Sat. 24. Mrs. R. S. Lillie.
 - Sun. 25. W. J. Colville, Mrs. R. S. Lillie.
 - Mon. 26. Conference.
 - Tues. 27. Prof. W. M. Lockwood.
 - Wed. 28. Geo. F. Perkins.
 - Thur. 29. Mrs. R. S. Lillie.
 - Fri. 30. W. J. Colville.
 - Sat. 31. Prof. W. M. Lockwood.
- September.
- Sun. 1. Prof. W. M. Lockwood, Ida P. A. Whitlock.

Miss Maggie Gaule will give tests from the platform the last two weeks of the meeting.

Edgar W. Emerson will give tests from July 18 to July 25th inclusive.

F. Cordon White will be at the camp the entire season giving not less than two weeks of his time to platform work for the association.

J. T. Lillie and J. W. Lane will have charge of the vocal music, as in former years.

The Northwestern Band and Orchestra, with F. B. Nichols as leader, will be present the entire season.

Prof. H. D. Barrett will act as Chairman, presiding at all meetings that are held in the Auditorium.

A LOVING TRIBUTE TO A LOVELY WIFE.

[The following is from the Guides of Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, and was in substance given at the memorial service held for our arisen sister at Mrs. Richmond's regular Sunday service in Chicago, Feb. 10.]

ONE week ago to-day there passed from earth-life one of the noblest women, one of the most devoted lives that Truth ever possessed: Mrs. Marion Skidmore, of Cassadaga. She was the real "Mother in Israel" of Cassadaga Camp, that Mecca of all true Spiritualists. Mrs. Skidmore, with her noble husband and a few friends, were the real pioneers in the work of making a summer resort and "School of Philosophy" that more than rivals Concord or Chautauqua.

Her devotion and untiring zeal, her almost ubiquitous presence, her far-seeing and enlightened judgment, her sympathy with every great and good cause, notably that of the political enfranchisement of woman, rendered her advice and aid most valuable in and out of the councils of Cassadaga.

Coupled with the intuition that is the prerogative of woman, she possessed, in a remarkable degree, a calm judgment, a clear reason, and an insight into the requirements of the spiritual needs of the age; this made her ever seek to keep the platform at Cassadaga a broad and liberal one, for she felt that Truth is many-sided and all sides must be heard to secure the best good to the human race.

She recognized in Spiritualism the redeeming, all-inclusive Light of the world, and she was desirous that those working in other channels of human uplifting should draw near to this Light and learn of its Wisdom; her ardent support of other means of reform was instrumental in bringing many reformers with limited views to see the true scope of the great Spiritual movement.

The beautiful home of Mr. and Mrs. Skidmore is at Cassadaga, where their work and affections have ever been since it had its beginning. It was from her home that the pictures and other articles of beauty came, that adorned the platform.

It was her vigilant eye and ever ready hand, and her loving command of others that gradually made the wilderness of Cassadaga to blossom as an Eden; yet not one of the few tall hemlocks that remained would she allow to have removed, they are still the stately sentinels of that heaven guarded spot.

But the chief charm of all was her loving and sympathetic heart, her loving care for the mediums and workers in our cause. The home of the Skidmores was ever the home of the speakers, and they, with other members of the Board, seemed to vie with each other in surrounding the speakers with the best possible conditions for their work. What wonder that some of the best inspirations of this age of inspired thought have come from Cassadaga!

Her loving presence pervaded the home, and there, as elsewhere, her forgetfulness of self, and her devotion to the comfort of others was most manifest. Her personal sympathy was boundless, and no tired or overburdened heart ever went to her in vain seek-

ing for strength and succor; her words were few, but her sympathies spoke volumes.

In such a life there is no need to multiply words of praise, her life work of noble and loving deeds shines out resplendently; and now that she has arisen, from the feebleness of a body worn out in the service of humanity, what greater tribute can we pay than that her name and the remembrance of her are enshrined in the hearts of all who knew her and hundreds who knew of her silent work.

An abiding presence in the home and place, and heart, best beloved, she passes on from glory to glory; still scattering the blossoms of loving deeds around the pathways of those on earth who battle for the right, still one with them in all their labors for Humanity.

Frost blossoms fill the wintry air;
The earth is robed in bridal snow;
But she has raiment far more fair
Than web or woof of earth can show;
Raiment woven in life's best deeds,
Garlands fashioned of love's blest seeds.

She rises as the stars arise
To make more fair the heavens above;
The rainbow arch within the skies
Is like the path where she doth move;
For loving works well done below
Make now the way where she doth go.

When spring returns to bless the earth
And summer blossoms re-appear,
Her presence will give greater worth
To the fair glory of the year,
For she will watch them from above
And water with the dew's of love.

The water lilies on the lake,
The clematis beside the door,
Will of her loving thoughts partake
And brighten as she bendeth o'er;
While every tree and shrub will hear
Her spirit presence brooding near.

But chiefly will her calm, clear soul
Encourage those who toil for truth;
Strengthening with her blest control,
Girding them as with new found youth;
Bidding their labors ne'er to cease.
'Till all the earth blossoms to peace.

Great heart that loves her do not break;
Both of thy treasures are above,
But they thy life will not forsake,
Nor ever fail their strength to prove;
Bending as bend the heavens above,
They will ensphere thee with their love.

A "Bonnie castle Avelon"
More fair than that of earth she rears,
Where Love shines ever its walls upon;
Embowered in the radiant spheres.
She waits to greet you there one day
When earthly "mists have rolled away."

LILY DALE, Feb. 8, 1895.

A special meeting of the Cassadaga Lake Spiritual Association (auxiliary to the National Spiritual Association) was called for the purpose of taking action upon the transition of Mrs. Marion H. Skidmore, and the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

WHEREAS, In accordance with the action of the natural law of the Universe, our beloved and honored sister and co-worker, Mrs. Marion H. Skidmore, has been removed from our midst; and

WHEREAS, The relation sustained by her to the Society since its inception makes it fitting

that we, its members, duly record our sincere appreciation of her worth; therefore,

Resolved, That the sudden removal of such a worthy and efficient member of our Society and community leaves a vacancy and shadow that will long be deeply realized by all the members of our organization and its friends and will prove a grievous and irreparable loss to our community and Camp and the public at large.

Resolved, That the wisdom and ability which she has exercised in our midst by wise counsel, willing service and ready funds will ever be held in grateful remembrance by all who have been associated with her.

Resolved, That with tender heartfelt sympathy for the deeply-afflicted relatives, especially the bereaved husband and friends of the deceased, we express an earnest, ardent hope that even so great a bereavement and loss may by the higher powers of light and spiritual love be overruled for their and our highest and everlasting good, in patient resignation to the law of the inevitable.

MR. A. BOWER,
MRS. C. A. BOWER,
MRS. J. E. HYDE,
MRS. D. W. HENDERSON,
MR. H. F. TODD,
MRS. C. M. GRISWOLD,
MR. D. R. BOVEE,
Committee.

A TRIBUTE TO CASSADAGA CAMP, 1894.

BY NELLIE E. DASHIELL.

As some rare gem, well chosen for the centre,
Outshines the other jewels round its crest,
Yet binds the whole in harmony resplendent,
Detracting naught of beauty from the rest,
But rather it enkindles with its lustre
The latent spark in each and every set,
Awak'ning, with that fire in its own bosom,
The kindred fire in e'en the plainest jet;

And as the rose, with tender grace, uplifteth
Its queenly beauty o'er the pansy's head,
Yet taketh naught of admiration from it,
But maketh all more beautiful instead;
And as the soul, unfolded in its powers,
Seeks not its own in doing good to all,
But yearns to reach into the darkest prison,
To light with love each cold and dismal wall;

So Lily Dale, amid Chautauqua's highlands,
Lifts her fair image o'er the valley lands;
In deep reflection from the lakelet's margin,
With soulful thought out reaching outstretched hands;
So does she stand, a beacon, mid surroundings
Entreating all the better way to find,
And throwing out, far in the distant gloaming,
The needed light to benefit mankind.

So must she keep upon her altars burning
The holy fires of Universal Love—
High in the light her snow-white banners floating,
"Good-Will to Men," and "Blessings from Above."
And while her soul, in fervid aspiration,
Calls blessings down alike on great and small,
Behold! the voice of Love's pure inspiration
In glorious measure to her lot doth fall.

Oh! long may Lily Dale unfurl her banners,
Proclaiming oft her welcome to the world.
Poor, storm-sick world! so blind and so a-weary—
So weak, despairing—in such misery hurled!
Long may she stand, in power of Love and Wisdom,
Dispensing good to Prejudice and Hate;
Long may she lead, with kind but firm decision,
Up to the Truth, which opens wide the Gate,
Lily Dale, Sept. 7th, 1894.

sympathy was boundless, and no tired or overburdened heart ever went to her in vain seek-

the Society since its inception